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S P E E C H

OF

MR. JOHN CHARLTON, M.P.,

ON THE

FRENCH LANGUAGE IN THE NORTH-WEST

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FRIDAY, 14th FEBRUARY, 1890.



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FOURTH SESSION—SIXTH PARLIAMENT.

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Mr. CHARLTON. Mr. Speaker: I realise, Sir, that the question under discussion is one likely to provoke angry feelings and race prejudices, and I shall endeavor to make the remarks that I have to make to-day in a conciliatory spirit. I shall of course feel bound to state my convictions, but I shall endeavor to do so courteously, and without, at all events, giving needless offence. I shall not agree with many of my fellow members of the House—with the majority of them probably—but, I shall ask of them that toleration that I accord to them in the discussion of this matter. It is, Sir, a disquietening question, and necessarily so. It is to be regretted that it is disquieting, but it cannot be helped. We might purchase quiet by the avoidance of the question entirely. We might purchase quiet by allowing matters to go on in the course they have been going without any protest or without any attempt on the part of those who believe that danger is ahead to avert that danger. I do not consider, Sir, that that course is necessary or advisable. We are certainly capable of discussing this question in this high court of the nation, in a spirit of fairness stating our convictions; and after having heard the arguments that are to be presented on both sides, the House will decide the question as the majority of its members deem proper.

The speakers who have addressed the House on this subject in the earlier part of this debate have, as a rule, taken the ground that a community of language in a country is not essential; many of them, indeed, I infer from their remarks, entertain the opinion that it is not even desirable. We have had the example of states in ancient times, cited here in a sense which would lead one to suppose that the speakers thought the example of those states worthy to be copied by us. We have had allusion made by the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Davin) to the fact that of the federal unions now existing in the world two of them do not possess community of language; and I think, Sir, if we regard the history, the present position and

the progress of those three federal unions, we shall find a very striking argument in favor of the doctrine I have advanced, that a community of language is desirable; for certainly neither the federal union of the cantons of Switzerland, nor that of the Provinces of Canada, bears any comparison with the federal union of the United States in point of development, population and power. The hon. member for Assiniboia treated us the other night to an exceedingly witty speech; I do not know that I can say that the spirit of the speech was quite in keeping with the magnitude and importance of the question he had under discussion. In the course of his speech he said that if you wished to make the French language permanent, you had but to attempt to restrict it. I do not know that the experience of the world would bear that assertion out. I do not know that the French language has been made permanent in the United States. Louisiana soon after was admitted into the American Union, the French language was not sanctioned as an official language; and the result of that prohibition or restriction, if the hon. member prefers the latter term, has not been to make the language permanent, but, on the contrary, to thoroughly diffuse and assimilate with the American element the French population near the mouth of the Mississippi; and I do not believe that any fair or proper attempt to secure the dominance of the English tongue in this country will have the result of making the French language predominant or increasing its use in the country.

My hon. friend from North York (Mr. Mulock) gave us a very nice essay on ancient history. He went back to the days of Queen Esther, and told us how King Ahasuerus sent his letters in 127 different languages to 127 different provinces. Well, Sir, if the hon. gentleman had gone a little further back, which he might very properly have done, to the time of the Tower of Babel, he would have found a time when one language was in use;

in the 11th chapter of the Book of Genesis, he would have read

"And the Lord said, behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and thus they begin to do; and nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do."

"Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language that they may not understand one another's speech."

Evidently the Almighty recognised the power of a community of language, and frustrated the attempts that were being made by the people of that day; he scattered them over the face of the earth, and brought in more than a dual language among the peoples of the world. The hon. member for North York tells us that Greece had a community of language, and yet that out of that community rival states with their animosities and bickerings arose, and there was no such thing as a national feeling in Greece. The great trouble with Greece was that it wanted commercial union, and the day of commercial union had not yet come. If the Greeks had adopted that policy, the bickerings and animosities which existed among those states speaking the same language would gradually have disappeared. In Rome, the hon. gentleman tells us, there were the Greek, the Latin, and numerous other tongues; they had no community of language in that great empire. Necessarily they had not. The Roman Empire was composed of conquered states; it had spread from the city on the Tiber, until it had covered nearly the whole of the known world; but does the hon. gentleman propose to tell us that the debates of the Roman senate, the Roman code, or the Roman statutes, were reproduced in all the languages spoken in that great empire? I think not. I think there was nothing in the Roman Empire corresponding to the condition of things we have in Canada to-day. Latin was used in the proceedings of the Senate and was, I venture to assert, the official language of the Roman Empire. Then the hon. gentleman came down to the days of modern history, and he gave us a long list of the nations having more than one language. He tells us that Spain, Italy, Sweden, the Netherlands, Russia, Austria, Turkey.

Mr. MULLOCK. No; I said nothing of Turkey.

Mr. CHARLTON. Well, we will drop Turkey. Does the hon. gentleman propose to hold those nations up for us to copy? Shall we copy the institutions of Spain, Russia or Austria?

Mr. MULLOCK. And Great Britain.

Mr. CHARLTON. We will come to Great Britain in a moment. Does the hon. gentleman tell us that all the languages used in those countries were the official languages of their diets and assemblies, and that the laws were published in all those languages? I think not; and if they were, we do not want a model from them. Then, I come to England, as the hon. gentleman proposes. He tells us that in Great Britain we have not only English, but the Gaelic, the Welsh, the Irish, and the French in the Channel Islands. Well, are the debates in the Chamber at Westminster conducted in Gaelic, Irish, Welsh and French? Are the resolutions put from the Chair of the House of Commons in all those languages? Are those official languages? By no means. English is the official language. The hon. gentleman tells us that the decrees of the English Parliament are read, I think he said from a high hill on the Isle of Man in the Manx language

Well, if he wishes us to adopt that plan, there could be no objection I imagine, and we should then have all the decrees of this House read from the highest peak in the North West, in French, in Icelandic, in Cree, in all the hundred and twenty-seven languages, more or less, that are spoken in that territory; we need not quarrel with the hon. gentleman in regard to that. The hon. gentleman tells us that there is no need of resorting to repression. Well, Sir, we do not propose to resort to repression; he is begging the question; we do not propose to interfere with any rights that exist in Canada by virtue of the provisions of the British North America Act, not one of them; but we do not want to extend certain features of our institutions to virgin soil; we do not want to extend the confusion that necessarily exists from the use of two languages. While we do not want to interfere with a single vested right, which exists in this Confederation, by virtue of the Confederation Act of 1867, we deny that these are vested rights in the North West Territories, a territory which has been acquired since Confederation, and we are not bound to have unplanted in that soil the condition of things which we do not propose to interfere with, but the existence of which we lament in the older portions of the Dominion.

We next heard from our friend whose riding is Rouville (Mr. Giguault), a gentleman to whom I always listen with the greatest pleasure, a gentleman who is a logical speaker, and who represents his views temperately and forcibly. He accused my hon. friend from North Simcoe (Mr. McCarthy) with being governed by American rather than by British precedent and example. No doubt the hon. gentleman from Simcoe thought that American example might be as good to follow as the examples of some of the Continental States of Europe; and I do not know but that we might in many cases, with profit to ourselves, have paid more attention than we have to American example. For instance, if we had taken pains to examine American precedents with regard to the Franchise law; if we had seized ourselves of the fact that the American Constitutional Convention of 1787, after full consideration of the question, had decided to have no national franchise but State franchises, and that this decision was carried into effect and had been in operation for a hundred years with the greatest success and to the greatest satisfaction of the people, we might have avoided the legislative bungle which is now upon our Statute-book—the Dominion Franchise Act—and have satisfied the public more thoroughly than we have succeeded in doing. We might, if we had copied American example more closely, have taken the position earlier in the day on Provincial rights which has since been taken; and I do not know that the fact of being influenced to any extent by American example should be cast as a slur upon any public man in this House in discussing any public question. The hon. gentleman then will perhaps pardon me if, in dealing with this question of community of language, I refer him to American example bearing directly upon this question—the example to which I referred incidentally a few moments ago of the treatment of the language question in the vast territory of Louisiana, which was acquired by the American Government in 1803. Here was an old French colony with a large French population, containing

no Anglo-Saxon element of any consequence. It was necessary for the Government of the United States to give to the French citizens of Louisiana institutions and laws, and they made it a fundamental principle to be carried into effect at the earliest practicable moment, that the English language should be used through the territory as an official language, that the Legislature of Louisiana in its records of proceedings should use that tongue, and that the laws of Louisiana should be published in that tongue. Upon that basis the State of Louisiana was organised as speedily as possible, and upon that basis the French citizens of Louisiana became American citizens; and in course of time they have become so thoroughly assimilated that they are to-day American citizens in every sense of the word. Many eminent men come from this French element in Louisiana, such as General Beauregard, Pierre Soule, and scores of others, who figure in American history and have acquired prominence in American politics and literature. Any one going through New Orleans, as I did a short time ago, will see that there is one quarter of the city called the French quarter and another the English quarter. The old quarter which was occupied by the French is still called the French quarter, but you hear the English language everywhere, and you cannot discover any marked indication that you are among a people of foreign descent, so thoroughly Americanised have they become. That has been done in Louisiana, and the condition of things which exists there to-day is more desirable, certainly, to the American people than if they had a Quebec planted at the mouth of the Mississippi, just as we have one planted at the mouth of the St. Lawrence. Suppose the French language were extended over that vast territory comprising Louisiana and that great land west of the Mississippi, now comprising ten states and two territories, would that be a desirable state of things? Was not the wisdom of the American people shown in deciding that the French language should not be an official language either in the State of Louisiana as it exists at present or in any part of that vast territory west of the Mississippi extending from the Gulf of Mexico to the British line? Was not wisdom shown in excluding the French as an official language from that vast territory? Beyond question it was; and American example in that respect is an example we would do wisely to follow in dealing with the same question here.

There are other instances besides the one I have alluded to in the history of America. There is the example of the treatment of the Spaniards in Florida when that country was acquired by the Americans. The use of the vernacular language of the people was denied to them as an official language; the laws were not published in that language; the proceedings of the courts were not held in that language, but it was imperative that English should be used; and the consequence was that the Spanish population of Florida became speedily thoroughly assimilated with the Saxon population of the rest of the United States. We have another example. The United States, as a result of the war with Mexico, became possessed of the territory of California, which had a considerable Spanish population. Again the United States denied to that population the use of the Spanish tongue, as an official one, and made English the official language of the Legislature and the Courts. As a consequence

these people have been swallowed up by that great assimilating machine, and now, in a second generation, you can scarcely detect a trace of the Spanish nationality in the population of California. The Spanish element have become thoroughly assimilated with the American element, and thoroughly Americanised, and that has been accomplished by virtue of this rule, which the American Government invariably enforces when incorporating foreign elements into its body politic. We have another case, that of Texas. Texas was conquered and wrested from Mexico by a movement of adventurers from the South and South-West, and an independent nationality was erected there after a fierce struggle, characterised by such events as that of San Antonio, where the Alamo, defended by one hundred and ninety-two men, was captured by 7,000 Mexican troops after 1,600 of the assaulting force were killed, and not a soul left in the garrison. The bravery of the garrison is commemorated by the inscription on the monument in the square of San Antonio: "Thermopylae sent its messengers of defeat; the Alamo sent none." The courageous spirit of these defenders resulted in wresting Texas from the control of Mexico, and they made English the official language; and Texas is to-day one of the most prosperous and thoroughly American of all the American States, and you can scarcely find a trace of the existence of a foreign element in the population of that country.

Then my hon. friend instances the case of Cape Colony, and points to the fact that the Dutch language is an official language in that colony. Well, the circumstances of Cape Colony are quite similar to our own. The Dutch were the original settlers of the country. It was conquered by England, and it was wise probably to give to the Holland element of Cape Colony the use of their language. But Cape Colony is extending its bounds; English influence has crossed the Kahlari Desert to the north, and, following Livingston's pathway in his early explorations, has reached the Zambesi. England has taken possession of Lake Nyassa, a lake larger than Lake Erie, has shut out Portugal from that region, is pushing her possessions on further north to Lake Bangweulu, and has already acquired a vast empire in South Africa with immense possibilities and resources, an empire that may be the home of scores of millions of people in the future - a salubrious, fertile region containing hundreds of thousands of square miles. Does my hon. friend suppose the Dutch tongue will be extended to that region and become the official language in the new Provinces to be erected in that vast country, the basin of the Zambesi? I am sure such will not be the case.

Then the hon. gentleman alleged that my hon. friend from North Simcoe said in his speech that the French shall not read French literature. I do not understand the hon. gentleman to have said any such thing. I do not understand that he proposes to debar Frenchmen from the use of their literature or their tongue wherever they live. The Bill under the consideration of the House merely provides for the discontinuance of the French language as an official language in the North-West Territories. It says nothing about the right of the French people to read their language, or use it as they do to-day. It says nothing about the right of a Frenchman to use his language in this House, or throughout this Dom-

mon. Wherever his rights exist under the Constitutional Act, he can preserve and cherish his language; he may refuse to allow his children to learn any other language if he chooses to do so. The hon. gentleman objects, also, to the preamble of this Bill. I think last year, my hon. friend, the Minister of Justice, in the debate on the Desjardis Estates Bill, said that the preamble had very little to do with the Bill, that the character of the measure was best shown by the provisions of the Bill itself. However, I see nothing objectionable in this preamble, which reads as follows:

"Whereas it is expedient in the interest of the national unity of the Dominion that there should be a community of language amongst the people of Canada, and that the enactment in the North West Territories Act allowing the use of the French should be expunged therefrom: Therefore Her Majesty, &c."

That simply asserts that, in the interests of this Dominion, it would be well if we could have a community of language. I believe that statement, and I will support the Bill upon that assertion. The Bill itself asserts that the French language should not be used in the North West as an official language. I believe that, and I shall vote that it shall not be used there. Those who think otherwise can vote the other way. Each of us is entitled to his own opinion, and probably each may entertain their opinion honestly. Then, the hon. gentleman says that the French Canadians want only fair play and justice. I should be ashamed to take the position that I intended to deny fair play and justice to the French Canadians; on the contrary, they should have the fullest justice and the utmost limit of fair play; but this is an English colony, we live under British laws and institutions, and there is a vast country in the North West where all the institutions are plastic and unformed, and, because there are a few hundred or a few thousand children of French traders and French half-breeds in that territory, it is not necessary for the future welfare of this country that the dual language should be preserved there as official, with all the evils which we believe would flow from it to the general interests of the country. The North West is likely to become the seat of power in this Dominion; it is likely to have the great majority of the people of this Dominion; it is likely to become the most productive part of the Dominion, and therefore it is of the utmost importance, at this time, that this change should be made, when it can be done without any great trouble. When that country is young and in a formative state, we should put it on the right track. The North West ought not to be saddled with such a provision as the use of two official languages. I believe, in the interests of this country, that it should not be, and I shall so vote. My sense of duty impels me to do so. Then the hon. gentleman says, that Parliament is the proper place in which to deal with this. I thoroughly agree with him in that. The North West Territories, have not yet Provincial institutions. This clause 110 emanated from us. With this Parliament rests the exclusive jurisdiction up to this moment, and, if this Parliament has taken a step which is not in the interest of the country, or has done any wrong, let us undo that wrong and retrace the step. I shall vote to retrace the step and undo the wrong. The hon. gentleman will vote that this provision shall not be repealed. He has a perfect right to do so,

and so have all his fellow countrymen, but I shall vote that it be repealed, because I think it is not in the interest of the country.

Then we come to our friend from Algoma (Mr. Dawson), who tells us there were French in the North West before there were English. So there were, and so there were in Ontario, and they had stations in Detroit before there were any English there at all, and they had other stations in Michigan, Illinois and Wisconsin, and yet the French language has not been retained in those places. The English have acquired rights there by possession or purchase, and I believe that we may follow their example in the case of the Canadian North West.

I come next to the speech of my hon. friend the Minister of Public Works. I am bound to say that I considered that speech last night a bitter one. The hon. gentleman possesses tact and diplomatic ability, but last night he did not succeed in concealing the bitterness of his feeling on this topic, a feeling amounting almost to a sense of hatred of those who were opposed to him. He paraded before the House—as, of course, he had a right to do so—his devotion to his Church and his loyalty to French Canadian institutions. He is undoubtedly loyal to them. Referring to the French settlers of the North West, he asked "when have these men spoken treason?" I have not accused them of speaking treason but it is not long since they were in rebellion; and whether they were more in fault for that than my hon. friend and his colleagues, I am not now to say; but as to their loyalty to this country and its institutions, I doubt if they are entitled to any degree of consideration on that score. As to this question of loyalty and of the use of treasonable expressions, I must be permitted, I think, to refer to some of the circumstances which are indicative of the feeling amongst our French fellow-citizens, and I do this with a feeling of reluctance. I did not propose to do so; and, perhaps, it is not necessary to do so; but, I think, the Minister of Public Works challenged this reference by the allusion which he made in the course of his speech last night. In the city of Quebec, not many months ago, there was a great public demonstration on the occasion of the unveiling of a couple of statues, and speeches were then made by French Canadians of eminence, who may be supposed to give utterance to the feeling in French Canada, which, I think, possess a great deal of significance. I think there may be some here now who were present on that occasion. I have understood that the Tri-color was there displayed abundantly, and that the Union Jack was not so abundantly displayed; that the outward appearances would not impress any one with the idea that it was a British Province. I find that I have here a couple of extracts from the speech of the Premier of that Province, in the course of which he said:

"He was ready to declare that the Government of which he was the head was ready to disappear if that would be the means of uniting the French Canadian people for the triumph of their sacred cause. (Great applause.) For the sake of their nationality, for the sake of their religion, they must be united. Religion and nationality formed a harmonious union in their midst. The strength of the French Canadian people lay in the union of the people with the clergy."

A little later on, the hon. gentleman used the following language:—

"By coupling the name of the Jesuit hero, Brébeuf, with the immortal Jacques Cartier, they said to their listeners: 'It is useless to imagine that we will ever cease to be French and Catholic. This monument declares that after a century of separation from our ancient mother, we are still French. (Applause.) More than that, we will remain French and Catholic.'" (Great and long continued cheering.) He said this, not as a provocation, but as a reply. But once more he would say that to render this reply effective they must cease their fratricidal strife and be united. That was his word of advice to them on this great occasion. Let them cherish it and act accordingly, and all the actions of the fanatics of Ontario would come to naught. (Long continued applause.)"

An hon. member of this House, Colonel Amyot of the 9th Battalion, in response to the toast of the Militia, said, among other things:

"That they did not know the moment the French Canadian Militia would be called upon to guard their interest and their laws."

A statement that was received with great applause. Now, a little later on, we had a celebration at Montreal, and we had the ex-mayor of that city using the following language in a speech made by him:

"French Canadians were the sons of these colonisers."

He had been referring to the early colonial history of Canada, and the valor of the French Canadians in resisting the Iroquois and the English:

"French Canadians were the sons of these colonisers and fighters, and if they were not so good at firing guns as their forefathers, they would not be found wanting, if occasion required it, and the Iroquois and savages of to-day would be treated in a similar manner to those of former days."

Well, Sir, if I am to be compared to an Indian, I would rather be compared to a Iroquois than to a Digger Indian; but I think this language is not calculated to promote harmony and good feeling, and I think the language was not called for. There was nothing in the events connected with the agitation in the House last Session, and the agitation that followed that affair in the country, that called for any such manifestation of feeling in French Canada. A portion of the people of this country took the view that a law had been passed that ought to have been disallowed; they took the view that the prerogative of the Crown had been insulted and infringed upon; they took the view that sectarian grants had been made and that money devoted to a special purpose had been unconstitutionally diverted from that purpose and used for another. There was amply room for differences of opinion on this point; but it was not a subject that warranted the exhibition of the kind of feeling that is evinced by the extracts I read a moment ago.

Mr. GIROUARD. Will the hon. gentleman tell me the name of the paper from which he has been quoting?

Mr. CHARLTON. The name of the paper is the *Toronto Mail*. It is the only paper, so far as I am aware, throughout Ontario, that had a reporter there to report the proceedings, or from which we can obtain any information with regard to the matter whatever. Now, the hon. Minister of Public Works, in his speech last night, dwelling upon the matter of the loyalty of the French Canadians, reminded us that it was owing to that spirit of loyalty that French Canada did not embark in the revolution with the thirteen colonies and become a part of the American Confederation. Well, I have great doubts, Sir, whether it was loyalty to British institutions, or whether it was the fear

on the part of the French Catholic Church that union with these thirteen Puritan colonies would be detrimental to her interests as a church; and I have very serious doubts whether it was unmixed loyalty that actuated the people of that Province in the choice they made in regard to that matter.

Mr. CHAPLEAU. Keep those doubts to yourself.

Mr. CHARLTON. I have my doubts, and I have a perfect liberty to express them here to-day, and I think it is susceptible of demonstration that the choice in relation to that matter arose from the fear, on the part of that church, that acting in consonance with the thirteen colonies, would not redound to her interests in Canada. Of course, this is an opinion, and I suppose I have the liberty of expressing my opinions here with regard to this matter if I do it temperately and courteously, and I trust I have not exceeded the limits of courtesy in the way in which I have made the statement. Then the hon. gentleman asks: Is your birth better than ours, is your blood better than ours? Well, Sir, who had claimed that our birth or our blood was better than that of our French Canadian fellow citizens? It is not a question as to which is the leading race, as to which has the best lineage, as to which has the best blood. We do not say to our French Canadian friends that we are better in any respect than they are, but in the position we take we are actuated by a desire to serve the interests of this whole country, and that with five millions of people in this country, the true interests of each one are the true interests of all; and if in our opinion a special line of policy is likely to be more conducive to the interests of Canada than another, we have a perfect right to advocate that line of policy; and the hon. gentleman had no right to make the taunt that he did, and to strive to raise, as he did strive to raise, in his speech, feelings of animosity and bitterness. Then he went on to say that persecution and fanaticism would not stand. Well, that is true, at least I believe and hope it is true. I do not believe that persecution or fanaticism ever benefited a cause yet, and I hope that the time will come when evangelists can hold religious services in the city of Hull without interruption, and when the Salvation Army can parade the streets of Quebec with the same facility and ease that they can the streets of Ottawa. I hope that persecution and fanaticism in that respect will not stand in the Province of Quebec; and if the time should ever come when some French Luther wants to nail ninety-five theses, more or less, to the door of any church in Canada, attacking tithes, fabrique assessments, canon law, and medieval institutions of any kind I hope the time will come when any person, whether a clergyman or otherwise, will be at liberty to nail his placard to the door of the church and maintain that position, with free speech, and every right that pertains to free speech in Canada. Now, Sir, with regard to toleration, all that we want in this Dominion, all that we ask in this Equal Rights movement, is equal rights in religion, the right to worship God, the right to proclaim our belief, the right to carry on the usages of our religion in any part of this Dominion without molestation. That is all we claim. We have no desire to abridge the rights possessed by any man in this Dominion,



whatever may be his faith, and we only protest when a desire to abridge our rights is manifested by some other man against us. We have taken a position, of course, against sectarian grants; we take a position against union between Church and State, and any undue favors shown by the State to one church at the expense of another. It this is not sound ground, then I am much mistaken; if the position that we have taken on this matter is not unassailable, then I am laboring under a grievous error I suppose, Mr. Speaker, although the charge is not made directly against me, it was against my hon. friend from North Simcoe, and is likely to be made against me. I suppose that I shall be accused of fanaticism. Well, Sir, there may be some ground for it. My maternal ancestors were some of them Covenanters and were subjected to bitter persecution by the bloody Claverhouse. I can remember, as a boy, my own father being mobbed in the State of New York because he was an abolitionist. And I rather fancy that fanaticism is constitutional with me; it may be, I will not deny it. But if it is fanaticism to stand up for what I believe to be the best interests of this Dominion, if it is fanaticism to attempt to stem the tide that sets very strongly against me in this matter, to venture to take a position which alienates friends and embitters the hostility of foes, then I am a fanatic. But I stand up to-day to assert my belief that the use of the French language in the North-West as a dual language is unnecessary, that the use of the French language as an official language in the North-West should be prohibited, that it may easily be done, that no shock or agitation will result from doing it, and that it will be an act of supreme folly, when the matter is brought to our attention, to refuse to do it. The hon. gentleman said there are 1,500,000 French in Canada, and they are not to be driven from this country. Who asks to drive them from Canada? Who proposes to drive them from it? Who proposes to deprive them of any rights they possess to-day? They are welcome in Canada. We are glad to have them as citizens of this country, and we welcome them to share everything with us, and in any action we take to have in view the interests of the French as well as the Saxon inhabitants of this country. Then the hon. gentleman makes the plea of inherent rights to the use of the language in the North-West, because there are a few thousand French Canadians, more or less, in this country. The argument would apply to every portion of the Dominion where French Canadians are found. If there is an inherent right to the use of the French language wherever there are French Canadians, that right will apply to Ontario, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island; and if that argument is sound, you must not only retain the use of the said language in the North-West, but also extend its use over the entire Dominion. Then the hon. gentleman tells us: "Oh, well, the expense is small, it is an exceedingly little thing to make such a row about." He said the cost up to this time had only been \$400 a year, and he added, "I will pay that amount out of my own pocket rather than have any trouble." Sir, it is not a matter of expense; that does not enter into the calculation. It is a matter of the future well-being of the North

West; it is a matter involving the whole welfare of the future inhabitants of that great country, which may in fifty years have millions of inhabitants, instead of a few thousands; it is a question of laying the foundation on which the institutions of that country will rest, the moulding of the plastic elements which are to form the bed rock of the future. It is not a question of a paltry few hundred dollars, which may have been spent hitherto in the cost of maintaining this system of a dual language in this country. Then the hon. gentleman told us, and he did so in a manner which amounted almost to a menace, that the French are united, the French in this House are united, they will stand by their rights, they will vote as one man, for there is no politics in this question. Well, the hon. gentleman felt, perhaps, as he has often felt before when he has had the entire French element at his back, that he was master of the situation; very likely he felt so. That is one of the troubles which exists in political matters, and a combination of that kind on race lines has often controlled most important legislation here. I cannot retort upon the hon. gentleman by telling him that the English are united, because they are not. They do not unite readily upon a matter of this kind. There are differences of opinion; they cannot be readily united for the purpose of maintaining race privileges and interests. There is too much magnanimity among them; they feel it would be an act of tyranny to unite on this matter, as the hon. gentleman claims the French of the country have done. But if that feeling is to govern the conduct of the French members of this House, if they are to unite together on race lines, in the manner which the hon. gentleman told us they have done on this occasion, the natural result may possibly be that it will lead to a union of the same kind of the other element; and this is certainly to be deprecated. Then he said: Why not treat the French as brothers and friends. Well, surely, why not? We have nothing, we seek nothing that we will not share with the French equally. What are our aspirations? Look at our annexations. We have acquired the North-West, we have acquired British Columbia, we have acquired Prince Edward Island, and we wish as soon as we can to acquire Newfoundland. We are determined to possess one-half of this continent. We have built a system of canals, not for our present wants only, but to meet the requirements of the future, and we have perfected a waterway from the ocean to the heart of the Continent. We have burdened ourselves with an enormous debt for the purpose of building a railway from ocean to ocean. We are making vast grants and subsidies for the purpose of extending the railway system of the Dominion. We are carefully and laboriously perfecting a code of laws which we believe have no equal in Christendom. We have in this Dominion one of the grandest educational systems that exists in the world. We have liberty; we aim to become a great nation. These are our aspirations, and there is not one of those blessings, privileges, immunities, that we do not propose to share equally and fully with every citizen of the Dominion whether Saxon or French. Yes, we are prepared to treat them as brothers, and we simply ask from them the same feeling and treatment towards us as we are freely prepared to extend to them. They are our brothers. We feel that to

be the case. The latchstring we have always hanging out and the warmest welcome is always ready. We do not wish to have animosities, bickerings and prejudices existing; but we want to make this an English nation, we wish to have English institutions from ocean to ocean, we wish the North-West with its future 30 or 40 million to be a Saxon North-West. We are honest in this wish, and we desire that every individual in this country should share the blessing that would be secured by this consummation. If we could only have on the part of the Minister of Public Works that degree of self-denial which would enable him to make British citizenship something more than a second or a third-rate consideration, if he could only make it prominent and superior to his devotion to French institutions, it would be a great thing for him, a fine thing for his race and a fine thing for this Dominion, and the same may be said of all who entertain the opinions he entertains.

I come next to the hon. member for Drummond and Arthabaska (Mr. Laverne). I am bound to say that the spirit and the attitude of the French members of this House upon this question, and upon all questions for that matter, is above all praise. I say this truly; I say this fully. They have shown there may be an exception or two, for there is an exception to every rule—fearance and a desire to treat this question fairly; they have not evinced bitterness, they have not evinced bigotry, they have not evinced prejudice in an undue degree, and this is especially true with respect to the French Canadian Liberals of this House. The hon. gentleman to whose remarks I am referring, spoke last night in defence of Canadian rights, the rights that are guaranteed the French race under the constitution. I can agree with him. There is not a right guaranteed to the race under the constitution which I wish to see impaired; there is not a right the integrity of which I wish to see impaired in the slightest degree. This is not a question of the preservation of rights existing; it is a question as to the formation of new institutions and a polity that will be adopted with respect to the vast unoccupied territories of this Dominion.

Then we come to the remarks of the hon. member for Bothwell (Mr. Mills). The hon. gentleman treated us to a very learned dissertation, to a speech which, of its character, is perhaps the finest I ever listened to in this House. It was a most admirable contribution, and it was listened to, beyond doubt, with the greatest degree of pleasure by the hon. members of the House. I am afraid, however, it will be above the comprehension of the average elector and may not be read with effect by the millions in the country. I was struck with one point in the hon. gentleman's speech which I thought evinced a want of tact. He said that three millions people could not swallow two millions, that it was not a cod that swallowed Jonah but a whale. Now, the comparison of the French race in this country to Jonah was, I think, on the part of the hon. gentleman, somewhat unkind. We are not proposing to swallow this Jonah; we do not expect to undertake any such impossible task as to swallow two millions people—not by any means, but we do expect to get the institutions of the North-West fixed up in a right shape and we have no doubt in the world that we will succeed in that.

Mr. LANDRY. You don't want to swallow it, but you want to throw it overboard.

Mr. CHARLTON. No, nor that either. We expect to allow our French Canadian friends to enjoy whatever privileges they ever have enjoyed, and we do not question their right to enjoy one of these privileges. If we can secure the gradual assimilation of the races, if we can secure gradual homogeneity, we will be glad, and if we cannot we will be sorry. The question of the two languages in the North-West is the question we have in hand to-day. We propose if possible to have that North-West an English country. I have not time this afternoon to attempt to follow the hon. member for Bothwell (Mr. Mills) in the various positions he has taken. However, he gave us an account of the attempt in the Netherlands to have community of language there, and said it was a failure. Well, we are not making that attempt in Canada, and it is not a parallel case, nor has it any bearing on the matter under discussion. We do not propose to make any attempt to force the English language upon the Canadians of Quebec, and therefore the comparison was far-fetched and entirely inapplicable. We merely propose that in a new country, where there are comparatively no inhabitants at all, that the English language shall be used as the official language in place of two languages. That is all there is about the question, from our standpoint. The hon. gentleman also said—and I cannot see what bearing it has on the case at all—that we had better commence with the aborigines by prohibiting the translation of books into their languages and by prohibiting the missionaries from learning their languages or from preaching the Gospel to them in their native tongue. It may be that this had a bearing on the case, but I cannot see it. There is no proposal to make the aboriginal languages in the North-West official languages, nor is such a thing dreamed of; there is no proposal to prohibit a man of the Cree or Sioux or Blackfoot tribes speaking in his native tongue, nor no proposal to prohibit the translation of the Bible into those tongues. Why the hon. gentleman should have brought up that argument I am unable to see.

Mr. DAVIN. I am sorry for that.

Mr. CHARLTON. I am sorry; my obtuseness is to be lamented.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Hear, hear.

Mr. DAVIN. Everybody else in the House saw it.

Mr. CHARLTON. I have no doubt my hon. friend's perception is very keen.

Mr. DAVIN. I saw it clearly.

Mr. CHARLTON. I repeat, Sir, that I cannot see what this matter may have to do with the question before us, because there is no proposal to make the Cree or any other Indian language official. The proposal before the House is to make the English language official, but it does not prohibit any man from reading, speaking or transacting business in any other language in the world, the Chinese or otherwise. My hon. friend (Mr. Davin) whose keen vision enables him to see a black rod in the dark may also enable him to see the bearing this has on the subject. The hon. member for Bothwell (Mr. Mills) proceeded to say that as there were several thousand French Canadians

in the North West Territories it was necessary and more convenient to have the two languages, in fact he went so far as to say that because there were a few thousand French in the North West it was a matter of absolute necessity to have the two languages. I wonder how they get along in Massachusetts without two official languages, where there are 75,000 French Canadians, or in New Hampshire where there are said to be about 10,000? It seems they get along quite conveniently with the English language there, and it seems that the French go there out of choice, and keep on going there and staying there, without feeling any hardship placed on them for the lack of their own language in these States. If the French can go to Massachusetts, Maine, Vermont and other New England States, why the same class of people cannot go to the North West if there is no French language there, is more than I can understand. We are told further that we have no specific information or expressed request from the North West for this change. We have all the information we want. We are dealing with this question on the basis of our own duty towards the North West. We took it upon ourselves some years ago it was done by the Senate to insert a clause with reference to the use of the French language in the North West, and when that Bill came back from the Senate to the House, the member of the Government responsible for the Bill, the Minister of the Interior at that time, assumed the responsibility for that clause in not insisting that it should be expunged from the Bill. No doubt this clause did not attract the attention it ought to have done then, and I do not suppose that the hon. the ex-Minister of Interior gave the matter any particular consideration. He was somewhat annoyed at the insertion of the clause, but as it was late in the Session he permitted it to pass. We have this matter now brought before the House, and we begin to realise that it is a question of some importance. The question is, shall we undo a certain piece of mischief that we did unwittingly a few years ago? I do not care what the North West will think of this matter. I do not care a farthing whether we have specific information or expressed requests, or not; the question for me is, is it a provision that this House of Commons, as the original source of authority charged with the management of the affairs of the North West, is entitled to insert in that Bill, in the interest of the North West and of the country at large? If it is, let it stand there. If it is not, I maintain that, without any reference to expressed requests, or without consulting the wishes of the North West, it is the duty of this Parliament to remove it. Then, the hon. gentleman says, let the people of the North West legislate upon this when they become a Province. I say so, too, and I say further, let them be placed in a perfectly untrammelled position to do with the question as they think proper. And when the North West in due time obtains Provincial Government, let them proceed *de novo* and determine whether they are to have French an official language or not. We will thus wash our hands of the question.

That is perhaps all I have time to say this afternoon in reference to the position taken by the learned and hon. member for Bothwell (Mr. Mills). Sir, the discussion on this question has taken a wide range. It has covered the whole of the colonial history of the country, and I will ask the indulgence

of the House for a few moments while I refer to some of the more interesting features with regard to this struggle which is taking place on this continent for supremacy between the French and the English races. We have had colonial establishments in America for three hundred years. Three of the nations of Europe laid their plans for the foundations of empire here—Spain, France and England. Spain colonised Mexico and South America, but all her colonial possessions have dropped from her grasp except Cuba and some insignificant possessions in the West Indies. France colonised Canada, and the history of French enterprise, French courage, French genius, and French daring in connection with the exploration of the vast interior regions of America reads like a romance. We have in the careers of La Salle, Joliette, Marquette, Hennepin, Tonty, and Duquesne, a story of adventure which, I repeat, reads more like a romance than the veritable records of history. I have often thought, Mr. Speaker, when crossing over the prairies of Illinois, how magnificent was the conception of La Salle as to the foundation of an empire in that region; I have thought of his discovery of Illinois, of his voyage down the Mississippi to its mouth, of his knowledge of the vast resources of that great country, of the enterprise which led to the planting of military posts at Detroit, Mackinaw, and other favorable points in the west and north-west. The French of that day were singularly adventurous. The young Frenchmen preferred leaving his home on the St. Lawrence and going to the wilds of the west, taking a dusky bride of the forest rather than one of the marriageable daughters of his own people. In this spirit the French penetrated the far interior of the continent, and surrounded the thirteen colonies with a cordon of posts, and, in their magnificent conception, took possession of some of the finest portions of this continent. On the other hand, we had the thirteen colonies planted by the English, a more slow-going, methodical people, without that dash and spirit of adventure which characterised the French; but these Englishmen sat down and began the founding of states, the building up of institutions and the formation of constitutions; and the result of their labor in due time was embodied in the American Republic, with such men as Washington, Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, and other great fathers of the American Confederacy, standing sponsors of the work. But before this consummation had reached a close, the possessions of France in the north had passed away from her. In 1759, on the Plains of Abraham, the French power gave place to the English flag, and that event was one having a more important bearing on the destiny of this continent than any other event in the history of America. That event led unquestionably to the American Revolution. But for the conquest of Canada, the thirteen colonies would not have thought of revolting at the time they did. The capitulation of Quebec in 1759, and the French cession of Canada in 1762, were followed by the ceding of Louisiana to the United States in 1803. The great Napoleon, convinced that he would be unable to hold that possession or to prevent it falling into the hands of England, ceded it to the United States for the sum of \$15,000,000, and with this cession the last vestige of French possession and French power in America passed

away. Now the Anglo-Saxon was placed in the ascendancy; it was the decree of fate that this should be the case; and what does he proceed to do? Why he sets to work to carry into effect with all possible haste his purposes. He intends that this whole continent shall have freedom and free institutions; he intends that it shall have religious tolerance; he intends that the history of the race on this continent shall be marked by the most wonderful material development of this or any other age; he intends to build up a great power on this continent; and he has done it. Already the second power in the world is the Republic to the south of us; the greatest of Britain's colonies is the one in which we live; and the power of these two countries is increasing in a ratio which almost dazzles the imagination. The Anglo-Saxon may be somewhat aggressive, but his purpose is nevertheless a beneficent one, and he intends it is his fixed determination that assimilation and homogeneity shall be the characteristics of every part of the land over which he bears sway. That is his fixed intention, and whether he can accomplish it or not, I am unable to say; but that he expects to occupy this continent, from the Arctic Ocean to the Isthmus of Panama, there is no doubt. My hon. friend asks, what he will do with Mexico? He will do with Mexico just what he did with the French in Louisiana and the Spaniards in California. He will say to them: Here are the institutions and the rights of citizens—take them; you are welcome to them; become American citizens, and there is no right belonging to an American citizen that will be denied you; and he will assimilate them all. He will not take them in all at once, as the whale swallowed Jonah, but he will take them little by little, and will ultimately assimilate the whole mass. In the working out of this problem, he will find our French friends, genial, tractable, industrious, naturally law-abiding. I cannot tell how potent will be the influences that will be brought to bear on them, or how rapid the assimilation will be; but I do not believe that the position of isolation which the French race occupy now they will see fit to occupy forever. On the contrary, I believe they will ultimately see it to their interest to join this great tide, to share this great prosperity, to become a portion of this Anglo-Saxon race which occupies this continent—to submit, in fact, to the decree of fate. They may not do it in this or in the next generation, and we must leave natural causes and forces to work their natural fruit; we cannot bring about the change by violent measures; we cannot do it either by this measure or by any subsequent one we may introduce. It is a matter in regard to which our French friends must be left to exercise their free choice. So long as they wish to remain as they are, they must be free to do so. In the evolution of affairs, when they see that some change will be beneficial to them, it is for them to choose it or not; they will act according to their own wishes, and be governed by their own free choice, be the result what it may. That the French race in Canada is capable of reaching the highest stage of intelligence and development goes without saying. That they will play an important part in the history of this continent is certain, but they never will fulfil the destiny which ought to be theirs while they remain in a position of isolation, without community of interest or community

of feeling with the kindred races upon this continent.

Now, I repeat what I have said several times, as I wish to make this point clear, that we have no intention to meddle with vested rights. It would not be prudent to do so. My hon. friend says, the use of the French as an official language in the North-West is a vested right. I say it is not. It is not guaranteed by the Act of British North America, but it is a right which exists by means of the surreptitious interpolation of a clause in the statute. That matter we are considering now, and it is competent for us to repeal that statute. We are not dealing with the constitution of this country at all. It is not necessary to conceal what the sympathies of the English-speaking people of this country are. While we do not propose to meddle with vested rights or to make ourselves officious or offensive in any sense to our French Canadian citizens, we do not deny that we consider medievalism a little behind the age. We do not deny that we would like to see the French race rid themselves of it, not, as in France, in the flames and smoke of revolution, but by peaceful legislation. We do not deny that we would like to see them rid of their system of tithes, fabrique assessments and the other antiquated abuses under which they labor, but while they have our sympathy and while we bid them God-speed in any effort they may make to unburden themselves of this system, we do not propose to initiate any movement to that end. I shall feel sorry if the spirit of backwardness continues, and shall feel glad that something else should take its place. I feel free to make this statement, because it is my conviction that the condition of things in Quebec can be improved, and that the true Liberal, the true Reformer, will grapple with that condition of things.

The question may be asked: Why not take the amendment of the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Davin)? It may be said the North-West Territories are sure to remove the dual language, and that the result I aim at will then be reached anyway. Why not, then, take the amendment of the hon. member for Assiniboia, and shift from our own shoulders the responsibility of dealing directly with this question? Well, I answer that I prefer, as the more manly and honest course, that we should undo the thing we have done. It is my belief that it is incumbent upon this House either to affirm that the principle embodied in the 110th clause is right or that it is wrong. We do not want to shift the responsibility to other shoulders. If the inhabitants of the North-West want the dual language, they can have it after they get this power. It will be competent for them then to adopt it, but let us leave them perfectly untrammelled in this matter. Let us declare whether it is our opinion that the 110th clause of the North-West Act is a proper or an improper clause. Let those who believe it is a proper clause, vote for its retention, and let those who believe it is not, vote for its repeal. I am free to say that I would not vote to grant a dual language to the North-West under any circumstances. I do not believe it is our business to do so. I repeat if they want it they can have it when they have Provincial institutions; but it is not our business to saddle it upon them. We have no business to make any enactment of that kind.

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD. We are not saddling it.

MR. CHARLTON. We did saddle it, and we should unsaddle it. The hon. member for Cardwell (Mr. White) says that he believes in Provincial rights in this matter. Well, there is something rather curious in connection with the backdown of the Government upon this question of Provincial rights. It rather provokes my surprise I can remember when the Rivers and Streams Bill was disallowed again and again; I can remember when the railway legislation of Manitoba was disallowed, and when the Government asserted and they told the truth that they had unquestionably an unlimited power in the matter of disallowance. There can be no question, it is a matter in the discretion of the Government, which is responsible only to the people for the proper exercise of that power, and yet the Government have become the advocate of Provincial rights. They have had a new revelation on this matter; they have had a new light as to their duty; they do not feel warranted now in meddling with Provincial rights at all since the *Jesuit Estates' Bill*; and the hon. member for Cardwell has no doubt whatever that in this difficulty Provincial rights should govern. I think the position of the Government is scarcely a creditable one; its abandonment of their position with regard to their right to exercise the veto power in the case of Provincial legislation does not reflect credit on them.

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD. We cannot veto this clause.

MR. CHARLTON. No, but we can repeal it.

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD. That would not be the exercise of the veto power.

MR. CHARLTON. But I am making some remarks on the position taken by the hon. member for Cardwell (Mr. White), who believes this question should be referred to the Provincial Government of the North-West Territories, when organised, for the settlement of this question, because it is a matter *pertinent to Provincial rights*, and I say it is a matter which pertains to us. The authority emanates from us, the clause was adopted by us, the clause should be rescinded when invested with Provincial authority and powers by us, and then the Provinces of the North-West will be placed in the position to exercise Provincial rights, and say whether they will have this thing or not. Reference was made by some speaker, in the early part of the debate, to the petitions sent in by the North-West Council, and the insinuation was made that the hon. member for North Simcoe (Mr. McCarthy) had bought the Council. I do not remember who made this charge. I do not think the hon. member for North Simcoe has the funds to buy that Council, and I would not deem it a very creditable thing on the part of any hon. member to cast that imputation upon him. Another assertion made was that his speech has captured it. That is an assertion more flattering to the hon. gentleman than the other, and I have no doubt his speech had very much weight and influence in the North-West; but the fact is the public is alive to the importance of this question, and that the sentiments of the North-West and Manitoba are against the retention of this dual language. That

was shown by the repudiation of the French language in Manitoba the other day by a vote of twenty seven to six; and by a larger proportion than twenty seven to six, the people of Manitoba and the North-West will sweep this language away whenever they are given this opportunity.

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD. Leave it to them.

MR. CHARLTON. Certainly we will. We will sweep it away here, and leave it to them to deal with it there. We may adopt the politician's expedient of shifting the responsibility from our shoulders and dodging out of this thing, but I do not think that would be very honorable or creditable to this House. I appreciate fully the feelings of hon. members who will vote for the retention of the dual language clause. I appreciate the feeling of the French members of this House who believe in the extension of their language over the North-West. They act according to their convictions, and I shall respect their action if they vote accordingly; but I cannot agree with them, and will therefore vote the other way. I hope that the French members will forgive, if they deem it necessary to forgive, that feeling which they cannot endorse, but which English-speaking members of this House entertain, a feeling of pride in the history of the British Empire; that feeling which causes them to take pleasure in contemplating the result of the battle upon the Plains of Abraham; that feeling which leads them to rejoice in the results of the Battles of the Nile and Trafalgar, and in the results of the Battle of Waterloo; that feeling which makes them view with pride the progress of the British Empire, and inspire in them the belief that British institutions are the best calculated to conduce to the prosperity and welfare of mankind. I hope, Sir, they will forgive our purpose, our avowed purpose, to make this a Saxon state. The avowed purpose of the Anglo-Saxon is to make the Anglo-Saxon race the greatest race on the earth, and the hope of the Anglo-Saxon is that the day will come, and come before many decades have elapsed, when the English language will be the common means of intercommunication between all the races of the world, and the English race will be the dominant race of the world, so that the Anglo-Saxon will fulfil the destiny which God has evidently designed he shall fulfil in this world.

FRIDAY, 21ST FEBRUARY.

MR. CHARLTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask the indulgence of the House for a few minutes, while I refer to some matters which I deem it proper to refer to before this debate closes. I can endorse, most heartily, the sentiment given utterance to by the speaker who has just preceded me, as to our regard to the mutual rights of the inhabitants of the various Provinces. If we should treat each other in a spirit of disregard for those rights, it would be a misfortune, a calamity, to the country. I am not able to understand, however, that the rights of the French-speaking community of the North-West, with regard to language, are vested rights. They certainly are not vested rights in the sense of the rights conferred by the British North America Act on the French inhabitants of the Province of Quebec. These rights were granted by the North-West Territories Act in 1877, and, in my belief, it is quite competent for the Legislature

which granted those rights to repeal the enactment by which they were granted. Now, I have noticed, in the treatment of this by almost all the speakers opposed to the Bill under consideration, a disposition to magnify the evils which are likely to result from this discussion, and to place on false grounds the object sought by the Bill, and the consequences likely to result from its passage. It is asserted that the Bill is conceived in a spirit of enmity to the French race, and that the effect of its passage would be to set the two races at each other's throats and to disturb all the good relations existing between them that, in short, it is a public calamity, that the subject of the retention of the dual languages in the North-West should be mooted at all. If this is the case, we are unable to approach this subject in any sense without the consequences to which I have alluded. The real subject before us is not a design to assault the inhabitants of a great Province in this Dominion, to abridge their rights or to attack their language or their institutions, or to interfere with vested rights that exist in accordance with the provisions of the British North America Act. That is not the design of this Bill. The hon. gentleman who brings this Bill before the House expressly disavows any such designs. The design of the Bill is to retrace the false step which, in the estimate of some members of this House, has been taken in forming the institutions of a new land, by repealing clause 110 of the North-West Territories Act and leaving to the people of those Territories the full and free exercise of Provincial rights in establishing their own institutions, without being handicapped by us by any legislation here, and thus replace them in the position of doing, as they should have had the right to do in the beginning, what they please in this matter.

Now, there are three plans before this House: There is the Bill of the hon. member for North Simcoe (Mr. McCarthy); there is the amendment of the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Davin); and there is the amendment of the hon. Minister of Justice (Sir John Thompson). The first of these plans is a direct one, and the one which I prefer. It proposes to settle this question at once, so far as this Parliament is concerned. The second is in some respect of the same character as the first. It proposes to recognise the assertion as true that the existing state of things in the North-West Territories shall not be insisted on as permanent by this House; but it proposes to remove from our shoulders the responsibility of dealing with this question and to relegate it to the Assembly of the North-West Territories after the next elections, when that assembly shall have power to deal with the whole question. Plan number three is not only indirect but partial. It proposes, in the same indirect way, to shift the responsibility from our shoulders of dealing with this question and to place it upon the shoulders of the North-West Assembly, but it proposes to deal with only one feature of the case, namely, the use of the French language in the Legislative Assembly, leaving untouched the use of that language in the courts of the North-West and in the printing of the ordinances. In my opinion, the plan proposed by the hon. Minister of Justice is the least worthy of our consideration and support; and I must say that, after listening attentively to all the arguments advanced during the long debate on this question—which I do not

consider a question that ought to create that degree of bitterness of feeling which exists. I am persuaded that we ought to settle this difficulty promptly and peremptorily in our capacity as the sovereign source of power in this matter, by retracing the steps we took in the year 1877. I cannot understand that the use of the French language in the courts, provided for by the 133rd clause of the British North America Act, contemplates the use of that language in courts such as these established in the North-West. The language of that section is as follows:

"Either the English or the French language may be used by any person in the debates of the House or the Parliament of Canada and of the House of the Legislature of Quebec; and both those languages shall be used in the respective Records and Journals of those Houses; and either of those languages may be used by any person, or in any pleading or process in, or issuing from, any court of Canada established under this Act, and in, or from, all or any of the courts of Quebec."

Now, here is a remarkable difference in the language used regarding the courts of Quebec and the courts of Canada. Either language is to be used in any and all of the courts of Quebec, but they are both to be used in any court of Canada established under this Act only. What is a court of Canada established under this Act? The 101st section explains that:

"The Parliament of Canada may, notwithstanding anything in this Act, from time to time, provide for the constitution, maintenance and organisation of a general Court of Appeal for Canada, and for the establishment of any additional courts for the better administration of the laws of Canada."

So that reference is had in this 133rd clause to such courts as may be established in virtue of the authority conferred under section 101—such as the Court of Appeals, the Exchequer Court, or any court established as a court of Canada for the settlement of questions pertaining to the Dominion of Canada in which our French subjects and English subjects will meet for the purpose of trying cases from all the Provinces. But this clause does not, in my opinion, interfere with or apply to the courts of any Province in this Dominion, except the specially named courts of the Province of Quebec.

We have had a great deal of talk about Provincial rights in connection with this matter. In my opinion, any action but that proposed by the hon. member for North Simcoe would be a violation of the fundamental principle of Provincial rights. The hon. member for North Simcoe proposes to repeal clause 110. He proposes to give the inhabitants of the North-West Territories the right to form their own institutions when they become a Province; he proposes to leave them in the full and unrestricted possession of Provincial rights. But the amendment of my hon. friend from Assiniboia (Mr. Davin), and the amendment of the hon. Minister of Justice do not propose to do this; they only propose to make the condition, that we shall retain this authority and power which we have exercised and this law on the Statute-book until we have consulted the Legislative Assembly of the North-West Territories. The amendment of the hon. Minister of Justice proposes further, that we shall absolutely retain a portion of the abuse complained of, and only remove it in so far as it may apply to the Legislative Assembly of the North-West Terri-

tion; and neither amendment meets so fully the principle of Provincial rights as the proposition of the hon. member for North Simcoe, the essence of which is that we shall withdraw our interference, and allow the people of the North-West to deal with this matter themselves. That is the proper and the direct way to deal with this question. I see no reason to change the opinion I have formed, or to withdraw my support from the Bill, which I announced I intended to support. The use of the dual language and Separate Schools are local institutions, which we have no right, as a Parliament, to impose upon any section of this country. They are institutions which should be established, which should be arranged for, which should be legislated upon, by the Provincial authorities of the Province in which they may exist. I do not say that I would not consider that the Governor in Council has not the power to veto a Bill of this kind on the ground of general advantage or in the general interests of the Dominion; but I do say that, in my belief, the Government has no right to establish local institutions in any portion of the territories of Canada. For that reason, I believe that this clause 110 should be repealed. We must remember that Canada was formerly a military colony; we must remember that divergencies existed between the old French colonies and the English colonies in America; and these differences of opinion, these differences of institutions, and these differences of instincts, have, to a certain extent, come down to the present day. Canada was a military colony; it had feudal institutions, and the thirteen colonies were quite different from Canada. The Saxon colonies are quite different in many respects from the colony of Quebec; it is natural, therefore, that friction should arise between these two systems, and it is in the last degree unwise to extend the area of that friction. It would be much better to restrict it to the Province where the question under debate was first at issue, as we would do by repealing this clause and leaving the people of the North-West to settle the matter by themselves, than to set ourselves by the ears, from one end of the Dominion to the other, as we have been doing.

The hon. the leader of the Opposition has made a speech, which, I can say most sincerely, was, in my estimation, a most able speech, one which I admired exceedingly both for its spirit and tone, and for the tact displayed in it by that hon. gentleman in dealing with that question; and one which I admired also for the sentiments it breathed in defence of his race and native tongue, in respect of which I could almost respond to the sentiments he uttered; but I think he was mistaken in saying that this Bill necessarily provokes enmity between the two races, that it necessarily sets them against each other in a spirit of hostility. I do not think it is necessary to take that view. I do not think the scope of the question extensive enough of the issues involved great enough to warrant the two great races setting themselves by the ears in this matter. It is a local question, a question affecting a certain locality in this Dominion; it is in one sense a small question at this moment, affecting only a few thousand people. It may be a great question as to the future, but at present it is a small question comparatively, and it is a question we may as well settle at once and take out of the way.

In the course of the speeches which have been made, I have been severely criticised in some respects. My hon. friend the member for Kent, N.E. (Mr. Landry) took up an extract from a speech made by me at Essex Centre on the 12th July, in which I rather facetiously alluded to the alliance between my hon. friend the Minister of Customs and my hon. friend the Minister of Public Works as being rather incongruous, and said that, when they were lying in the same bed, the representative of the French nationality and the grand master of the Orange Order, that the friendship was rather a peculiar and suspicious one; and that I thought they could not both be acting according to their principles, and that I thought my hon. friend the Minister of Customs would be the one who would be sold. I do not know that that remark should be considered as offensive. We have seen other incongruous spectacles; for instance, during this debate, Pilate and Herod have been made friends together for we have seen the leaders of the two political parties, no doubt from patriotic motives, acting in concert; and that is a very unusual thing to see. They have been endeavoring to arrange this matter in certain ways, whereas I think the simplest way would be to repeal the clause to which I have referred.

My hon. friend the member for West Durham (Mr. Blake), in the course of his very able speech, advanced the argument that it was necessary to keep up the French language in the North-West for the purpose of encouraging immigration; and the First Minister said he would be willing to have German made an official language there also, in order to encourage immigration. No doubt, he would be willing to go further and adopt the Gaelic or any other language for that purpose. The question is, is the retention of that language or any other necessary to encourage immigration into that country? In the year 1871, the hierarchy of your own Province, Mr. Speaker, issued a joint letter warning the French Canadians against emigrating to the New England States, which, it was said, would imperil their spiritual interests, which would prove very dangerous to themselves, and which was something they ought not to do. At the same time, the hierarchy requested the people of that Province who might desire to emigrate to migrate to the Canadian North-West. What was the effect of that letter; what was the effect of that warning and of those arguments; what was the effect of these mandates, in the name of the Church, upon the Canadian French of the Province of Quebec? Did they quit going to Massachusetts and flock in large bodies to the North-West? Did the existence of the dual language in the North-West draw thousands of the French Canadian people there, or did the fact that there was no dual language in Massachusetts and Vermont prevent them from going to those States? On the contrary, there are to be found in the New England States more French Canadians than there are inhabitants in Manitoba, the North-West and British Columbia together, with a score or more thousands added to that number. They have gone to New England in spite of that mandate; they have gone to a country where English is the only language spoken; they have refused to listen to their own hierarchy; they have done what they were entreated not to do, and they have not done what they were entreated to do.

I think that is a fair argument to show that the retention of the French language in the North-West is unnecessary to promote immigration to that country. The Germans go there, and the Icelanders go there, though their languages are not official there, and I do not think that the absence of their language as an official one is the slightest bar to their immigration to that country.

In connection with this question of the anxiety of our French friends for the continuance of their rights—and it is a most natural anxiety on their part—it is, perhaps, a little significant that, one after another, the municipalities of the Province of Quebec are abolishing the use of the English tongue. I am informed that the great majority of those municipalities have already abandoned it. Wherever a municipal council petitions for power to abolish the use of English in its proceedings it is very soon obtained: an order is issued in the *Official Gazette*, and the use of English ceases. In view of this fact, I think our friends should not raise so much trouble in reference to the abolition of the use of French in a country which probably has no more population than an ordinary municipality in the Province of Quebec.

The hon. First Minister warned us of the terrible consequences of drawing up two races against each other. He said this was a question which could afford to wait, and a moment afterwards he said: For Heaven's sake, bury this and get it out of sight. It is certainly lamentable that two races should be drawn up against one another; but, if one race is drawn up, if that race is acting and aiming at a common purpose, it may become necessary to have some organisation in the other race, and our French friends have never, in my recollection, or, so far as I know, in the history of Canada, failed to press their own claims and to stand by their own interests. It may be necessary to watch the opposite party, because their devotion to their language, their religion and their race—which may be perfectly proper in their case and from their standpoint—may lead to demands, which, in the view of an impartial observer, ought not to be granted. In that case, the exhortation of the First Minister to beware of arraying one race against another, is out of place, because the English-speaking population in this country have always acted in a spirit of generosity and a spirit of magnanimity; and if the English-speaking people think it necessary to take some precautions for the future, it is not in a spirit of enmity to the French population, but, looking at the great North-West with all its resources, regarding it as the foundation of a great empire, we are justified in doing so if we have arrived at the conclusion that it is better at the outset to have the institutions there formed on the proper basis, when it can be done without any great contention, and to say that we will start with the English language and go on there with that language as the official one. I do not think it can be properly said by the First Minister that those who are in favor of that obviously common-sense arrangement are arraying one race against another.

Some of our speakers on this side appear to me to lack judiciousness. My hon. friend from West Ontario (Mr. Edgar), for instance, warned the French to beware of their enemies. Who are their enemies? I deny that they have an enemy

in this House, or in this country, or that any demand is made in this Bill which indicates enmity to the French race in this Dominion. The hon. member from Therville (Mr. Béchard), last night, in his temperate speech, spoke of the demagogues, whose designs were to provoke dissension and disaster. Was the hon. gentleman warranted in classing as demagogues those who seek for abolition of the dual language in the North-West? Is there anything like the spirit of the demagogue in this proposition to undo what we sincerely believe to have been a wrong step, and to place upon a proper basis the institutions for the future of a great country? If there is an act which is worthy of being characterised as an act of statesmanship which has come under my observation in this Parliament of Canada, it is an act of that character. Then the hon. gentleman read an extract from a speech delivered to his constituents last summer in which he proposed, as a remedy for all these unendurable evils which the French race was suffering at the hands of those who asked for equal rights—he proposes as a remedy annexation to the United States. Well, Sir, how much better off would his race be in that position? Would there be any less pressure that would tend towards unification of race and language? Would the influence brought to bear upon them be of a less aggravating character, if they wished to retain their isolation? Would the United States treat with a greater degree of forbearance than the Saxon population of this country does, the peculiar institutions of Quebec? Why, there would be danger of their being denied admission to the Union as is the case with Utah until they had adopted a Republican form of government and had rid themselves of medieval institutions.

My hon. friend the Minister of the Interior says: "Oh, this is a small matter; what is the use of making this row over a cost amounting to \$1,000 a year, or so? Let the whole thing go. Do not make the trouble you are making about this question." As I said before, it is not a matter of the cost; it is not a matter of the pressing importance of the question at this moment in any respect whatever. We are looking to the future, we are looking to the consequences in the future, and it is, because it is a comparatively small and trifling matter in itself, that we can now deal with it with so much greater facility and ease than we can by-and-by when it becomes a great matter, involving great issues in the North-West. My hon. friend from Queen's (Mr. Davies) tells us that the preamble is a matter of no great account. I agree with him. He says: Let the people decide. I agree with him most fully. The only fault I have to find with him is, that he will not act upon his assertion. He says: Let the people decide the question; and then he proposes to refuse to allow the people to decide the question. I say, let the people decide the question. Repeal the 110th clause, leaving them perfectly untrammelled; let them start *de novo* and decide whether they will have the dual language or not; leave them perfectly free to deal with their local institutions, without interference or meddling with them on our part.

My hon. friend, the Secretary of State, who, I see, is in his seat, had some strictures to make on my remarks, and I will ask the attention of the House for a moment while I refer to one or two of them. The hon. gentleman told us that the Protestants of Quebec did not complain. Well,

I do not know that the Protestants of Quebec have any great reason to complain; it would be, however, only natural, as they are in a very small minority in that Province, that they should be cautious about making complaints, because the evincing of a spirit of captiousness, or what is termed such by the majority, might lead to their having greater reasons for complaint. But I have heard complaints from the Province of Quebec. For instance, I heard complaints last year about the degradation of the degrees of Protestant universities.

Mr. LAURIER: That has been remedied.

Mr. CHARLTON: Yes, these complaints led to the remedy of that evil. A Bill has been passed to remedy the evil, and the passage of that Bill is equivalent to a confession that the Protestants had, in this matter, just cause of complaint.

Mr. LANGELIER (Quebec): They have no other cause of complaint.

Mr. CHARLTON: I believe that all the grievances and the difficulties between the two races might be settled in the same spirit. Then we have the question of the division of the school funds. I do not know if that has been settled or not, but there have been some complaints about that.

Mr. LAURIER: That is before the Council of Education.

Mr. CHARLTON: Taking the school funds paid by corporations, such as the Bank of Montreal, the Grand Trunk Railway and the Canadian Pacific Railway, of whom the great majority of the stock holders are Protestants, and dividing the taxes paid by these corporations between Protestants and Catholics in relative proportion to the population, whereas they ought to be divided in proportion to the religion of those who paid the taxes.

Mr. LANGELIER (Quebec): Is that done in Ontario?

Mr. CHARLTON: Not now, but I understood that it was the case once. Complaint was made, and I think the evil has been remedied, although I speak under correction with regard to that matter. Then the hon. gentleman makes an allusion to something which I have said in one of the speeches I made in the country, and which he thinks was of the most insulting character to the French population—something, I think, with regard to cutting a road to the St. Lawrence with the sword. Well, Mr. Speaker, upon one occasion, I forget where, when we were somewhat warm over these declarations in Quebec, and by the bye, let me state that I am happy to learn that the language attributed to Mr. Metcalf has been very much modified by a more authentic report of his remarks, but when we were somewhat roused by the talk about a French nationality, and French national institutions, and the building up of a French state at the mouth of the St. Lawrence, I did say, I think once, in one of my speeches, that if the French inhabitants of Quebec attempted to create a separate nationality, planting themselves upon the St. Lawrence and denying the western Provinces access to the sea, in that case it would lead to an attempt to cut a road to the sea with the sword. I have nothing to retract upon that score. If that attempt were made, such a result would unquestionably follow.

Now, Sir, a few words with regard to my hon. friend from West Durham (Mr. Blake) and the criticisms made by that hon. gentleman upon the remarks I had made just before he spoke. I may say that I spoke without due preparation; I had only the time between ten o'clock in the morning, and three in the afternoon to prepare my brief, and in the haste of preparation I probably did fall into some inaccuracies, and amongst these inaccuracies was one, technical rather in its character, with regard to the course adopted by the United States Government when Louisiana was purchased in 1803. I stated that the United States Government, from the inception, had sought by every means to secure a single language, and had abolished the use of the French. But I find that for the first few years that policy was not so rigorously enforced as later on, and the use of French was permitted, to a limited extent, and in that sense my hon. friend had me at a disadvantage; for I had gone upon the assumption that the well understood general policy of the Government had been more vigorously enforced than probably was the case at the outset. But so far as the policy of the United States Government was concerned, with the new states along the Mississippi where French settlements were established, and in all these settlements outside of Louisiana proper, the French language was never used officially at all.

Mr. CHAPLEAU: The Civil Code of Louisiana was printed in French in 1825.

Mr. CHARLTON: I am referring to the territories away to the north along the Mississippi and the Missouri. But I am free to admit that in this criticism upon the policy of the United States with regard to Louisiana, I fell into a technical error, although the position I took in regard to the general policy of the United States with regard to Louisiana, and to all other portions of the country originally settled by foreign nations and incorporated with the United States, was perfectly correct. Then the hon. gentleman indulged in some criticism about the use of the pronoun "we"; he seemed to be under an apprehension that I would convey the impression that he acted with me, or believed with me, in this matter. Now, Mr. Speaker, I always desire to avoid giving ground for the charge of egotism, and, consequently, avoid, as far as possible, the use of the pronoun "I." I do not like to see a large "I" used too freely. But, on this occasion, I find that the hon. gentleman himself used the word "we" in his speech, and used it on several occasions. In speaking upon this occasion when I used the word "we," I used it, not as including those who disagree with me, but referring to those, be their numbers great or small, who agree with me in this matter. Perhaps, if it suits the hon. gentleman, I may use the personal pronoun "I" and ignore the "we," ignore all who are associated with me in this or other matters. But, in my opinion, this part of the hon. gentleman's criticism was a very "wee" matter indeed, and the spirit in which it was made was not one I admire very highly.

In the course of the speeches made by different members of the House, the motives of those who engaged in the Equal Rights movement during last summer have been very severely criticised. We have been termed fanatics and demagogues, and there is scarcely a term of disrespect in the

political vocabulary that has not been applied to those gentlemen who saw fit to associate themselves in this movement in this House and in the country during last summer. I feel bound, under the circumstances, as the question has been raised, to say a few words in regard to this matter. What, probably, were the motives, I would ask, that actuated these thirteen men who stood up in this House and voted against the 188 members? What were, probably, the motives which actuated those men in the course they took after the prorogation of Parliament? Do you think, Sir, they were seeking after popularity? Was it with any desecration political advantage that those men united and embittered their toes and made foes of their friends? You, Sir, sat in this House on the night that vote was taken. Do you think any one of the thirteen stood up under flattering and encouraging circumstances or because there was a great advantage to be gained? No; no one will suppose that such was the case; and whatever may have been the motives which actuated those men, you can scarcely, under the circumstances, attribute that action to base, mercenary or dishonest motives. We felt that having taken that stand, it was perfectly proper to defend our position in the country. We felt that we were standing on principles that were just, and it was as proper to vindicate them upon the platform as upon the floor of the House of Commons. We thought we were resisting the investing of a dangerous order with special advantages and privileges. We may have been mistaken, but we believed that was the case, and, acting on that view, we submitted to the country similar arguments to those we had presented on the floor of this House. We believed we were resisting an unconstitutional reference to a foreign potentate. I believe it now, and believing it we felt bound to act on that belief. We believed we were resisting sectarian endowment from public funds. We believed this, and we held that it was establishing a precedent of the most dangerous character, and believing that we acted honestly before the country in denouncing it. We believed we were resisting a dangerous encroachment by clerical power. Believing this we denounced it. We did not propose, no man who has taken part in this agitation ever proposed, to deprive any subject in this country of any rights he possessed. No man has ever proposed to ask for himself what he was not prepared to give to every citizen in this country. We ask no special privileges; we merely resist the granting of special privileges. We ask equal rights for all, special privileges to none, a guarantee of the fundamental principle of liberty to the subjects of this country. I understand the hon. member for North Simcoe (Mr. McCarthy) said he did not sympathise with the movement made by the Equal Rights party in discussing this question on the platforms of the country. I believe it was a proper way to influence public sentiment, and that it was necessary.

Mr. McCARTHY. Perhaps the hon. gentleman will allow me for a moment to say that I do not think I said that; I did not mean to do so. I said I took no part, because I realised that no object would be gained.

Mr. CHARLTON. I understood the reason why the hon. gentleman refrained from doing so was because he disapproved of it, and I am

happy to receive his explanation. This movement, which is derided and condemned in this House, has, I believe, accomplished something; and, I believe, what this movement has accomplished is of the most salutary character. It has certainly awakened public attention to the existence of a great public danger. I believe it is due to this movement that the agitation exists in Manitoba with respect to the dual language and the Separate Schools; and the abolition of both of those evils, as I deem them to be, may be justly attributed to the agitation that commenced with the vote taken in this House on 29th March last. I believe this agitation has succeeded in arousing public sentiment in the North-West with respect to the dual language, and the fact that we are discussing to-day a Bill with respect to the abolition of the French language in the North-West, and that we have in the North-West a sentiment so pronounced as to have demanded the introduction of this Bill, is due to the agitation of the question of equal rights up and down throughout the country since the prorogation of the House last Session. The harvest is satisfactory; the results so far are abundantly satisfactory, if nothing else is accomplished; and if this Bill passes, or if the North-West is relieved of the burden of the dual language, there is nothing else to ask for, because the Constitution grants the rest.

Mr. LAURIER. What about the agitation in Quebec?

Mr. CHARLTON. We do not expect to have any. I do not say there has been such an agitation. I say there has been an agitation in Manitoba against the dual language and separate schools, and there has been an agitation in the North-West Territories, and it is a foregone conclusion that in some way or other the dual language will be removed there. On broad principles we are dealing with this question, and our sincere desire is to secure homogeneity and assimilation. We desire it, we do not expect to force it, or that it will come immediately; we hope it will come some time by the force of circumstances, and we hope, when the day comes, that solution will be reached by a consensus of opinion among the people of the Dominion. We hope for this, and anything that will exert influence in this direction without trampling on the rights of others is something we may properly make use of. The North-West is virgin soil, and any seed that is undesirable should not be planted by us there. Our first Act with respect to this question was wrong; I believe we cannot do better than change that Act, and in doing so we will act strictly in consonance with the principle of Provincial rights. With respect to vested rights in the Province of Quebec, I repeat that, so far as I am concerned and my influence extends, I have no idea, thought, desire or purpose to deal with the Provincial rights of Quebec in any sense whatever. I may entertain my opinion as to whether it is desirable for Quebec to have different institutions, and I may, in a proper way and on a proper occasion, express that opinion, I trust; but so far as regard dealing in any manner with the vested rights of Quebec, I would not be a party to such an attempt or countenance it in any way whatever. The proposal to divide the continent between the two races is unreasonable. I consider

this country is under British institutions, and although the French language prevailed when the country was ceded to the British, and although the French language has been recognised and certain vested rights have been granted, yet the proposal to divide this great country between the two races and the two languages is unreasonable and unsatisfactory and not calculated to promote the future good of the country. The issue I think we all recognise is inevitable; no matter in what way we may deal with this question the dual language in the North West is doomed. It is doomed, whether this Bill passes or not, whether the motion of the hon. member for West Assiniboia (Mr. Davin), or even the motion of the hon. the Minister of Justice passes; in either of these cases it is useless to propose that the French language in the great North West will be retained for any length of time, and to remove a source of irritation we may as well meet the inevitable to day, and expunge clause 110 from the North West Territories Act, and leave those Territories in a position so that when they frame Provincial institutions they may deal with the question as they may choose on the basis of Provincial rights.